

REMARKS

The specification has been amended for clarity.

Claims 10-19 have been cancelled in favor of new claims 20-27, which have been carefully drafted for compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claim 18 was indicated as being allowable, wherefore a combination of claims 10 + 11 + 17 + 18 should be allowed. New claim 27 includes the limitations of claims 10 + 11 + 17, but does not include the limitation of claim 18. As will be explained, this limitation is not believed necessary to define patentably over the prior art of record.

Claims 10-15 stand rejected as anticipated by DE G 89 10 569. This reference discloses a fitting having a pocket hole, a bearing pin, and a holding screw, but does not disclose a safety screw received through the pocket hole. Accordingly it cannot anticipate claim 27.

Claims 10, 11, 16, and 17 stand rejected as anticipated by DE 299 24 319, which is discussed in applicant's specification at page 1. Referring to Figures 2 and 3, this reference discloses a pocket hole 11 which receives a bearing pin 12, wherein the pin is engaged by holding screws 29 to hold it in an extended position. However the bearing pin is not movable to an unextended position, where the bearing pin is substantially within the pocket hole. Further, there is no safety screw which is received *through* the pocket hole when the pin is in the extended position shown in Figure 2. Accordingly, this reference cannot anticipate claim 20.

Claim 19 stands rejected as obvious over DE '569 in view of DE 298 13 219, which is cited for its disclosure of a cover plate. However the latter adds nothing to suggest a safety screw received through the pocket hole of DE '569.

The newly submitted claims being definite and patentably distinguishable over the art of record, withdrawal of the rejections and early allowance are solicited. If any objections remain, a call to the undersigned is requested.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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